

# WKU KYVL FACULTY FOCUS GROUP

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### NOTES

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#### Tell us who you are (first name only!) and why you use library databases in general

Karin, of the Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies Department, uses **EBSCO**, OCLC and **ERIC** on a regular basis. "I love the fact that I CAN use them on a regular basis. I beg you, please do not take these out of the list!" I use them for personal [professional] reasons first (research, presentations). Also using ERIC for locating articles for a departmental task force working on a Title VI Department of Education grant to refurbish our beginning classes.

Jamie, of the Geography and Geology Department, uses **EBSCO** the most, both for her own research and she also has her students use it for her Research Design and Methods class for undergraduates. "This is an absolutely essential source for them. It is truly wonderful for them to have access to certain publications that Western's print library doesn't have for a variety of reasons." So I use it as a teaching tool probably even more than for my own research.

Mary teaches music history courses and of the KYVL databases uses mostly **Contents1st** and **WorldCat**. Her department also uses **ERIC** in music education classes. An essential database for her field that she uses constantly is **Music Literature** (RILM) which is not a KYVL database but is provided by WKU. She also finds the **ITER** database WKU provides extremely valuable for her music history research. Occasionally uses **Article1st**, but it's not too productive for music history.

Malia of the History Department talked with her colleagues to find out what they were using and many reported using **FirstSearch** more than once a week. Many of them also use the databases Mary mentioned (**Article1st**, **Contents1st**, **WorldCat**, **ITER**). "We're very pleased with what is being offered now and would hope that nothing would be cut." The number one thing that our department would like to see added is **JSTOR**.

Mike of the Philosophy/Religion Department finds "**WorldCat** essential to my work" to locate first editions of 17<sup>th</sup> century texts to order from ILL. He also has his students use databases for their papers which he links to from his Resource Web Page. **Academic Search Elite** is very important to his students and **Medline** and **HealthSource Plus** are essential for student research for his **Biomedical Ethics** class. **BIP** is very important for locating books to order for class and the **Union List of Periodicals** is also essential. Doesn't make much use of **Article1st** because doesn't have full text, while "Academic Elite is a relative gold mine."

Shelley of the Government Department uses **Article1st** for getting citations. Uses **Academic Search Elite** a lot as well as **Newspaper Source**. I also teach research methods classes and the students use **Academic Search Elite** a lot for that. I encourage them to also use **Article1st** but they hate it because it doesn't have full text and they have to actually come to the library! Students instead of looking for the article that would be the most appropriate, look for the article that is in full text.

Chen of the School of Teacher Education Library Media Department uses EBSCO full text a lot and has her students use it for her Adult Literacy and Reference classes. She has them use other (non-KYVL) databases as well, such as Biography and Genealogy Master Index and the ProQuest (ABI/INFORM and National Newspapers) databases.

Karen of the English Department uses **EBSCO** a lot in teaching her research paper based English 300 classes. She also uses EBSCO extensively for her own research.

**Why do you use the databases, or, not use the databases? Which databases do you use most frequently?**

Karin -- "It's too **convenient** not to use it, it's right there in your office....And it's much beyond the convenience, it's so **thorough**. You can hardly not use it." We assign our language students personal projects to work on the whole semester and they use the databases to gather information on their topic. Students are using the databases more and more and supports web based courses.

Karen -- "I actually find myself looking up things I wouldn't have bothered looking up if it required my going to the library."

Mary -- For myself **in music I don't use the EBSCO** much because Music Literature [RILM] is so much better for my field. It includes articles from journals, books, essays and collections and even obscure things. **Article1st is not that useful** in music either. And ITER is crucial for medieval music. EBSCO Academic Search Elite provides full text for some of the journals we already have in the library in the music history area, which is convenient but not necessary the way Music Literature and ITER are to my field.

Karen -- I use MLA constantly for my English classes and my own research. [It was noted here by the Assistant Moderator that MLA is not funded by KYVL but provided by WKU.]

Mike -- I use the Philosopher's Index a lot for my classes and research. [Another WKU funded database]. "What I would like is access to some kind of European database that's equivalent to Academic Search Elite." I'm not even aware if that exists.

**What's been particularly helpful about the databases?**

Karen -- "Above all, having **access** to..." texts "...that are **not available in our library**. It's a world of difference."

Chen -- Great for **working at home**; get full text without having to come to the library.

Shelley -- The "**peer review**" **publications button** in Academic Search Elite is very helpful for students in locating scholarly articles. It is very helpful in trying to teach students the difference between peer reviewed publications and popular magazines.

Jamie -- It's nice to be able to get the whole **breadth** of things, both popular and scholarly, as well as the ability to **restrict by date**. Often I assign students to look up events from particular dates, "...and is probably one of the most useful features that I point out to the students."

Mike – Another nice feature is the ability to do **multiple database searching** at the same time. Although it does take longer to do searches that way, it's handy.

**What subject areas would you like to see better covered in the KYVL databases? Do you know of a specific database that you'd like to be added?**

Mary – **ITER** and **Music Literature** for music history.

Mike – **Philosopher's Index**.

Jamie – **Ageline**, the most comprehensive database for gerontology which I need for my research interest, the geography of aging. Also **Geography** for all geography courses and for geology, the **GeoRef** database.

Mike – **Project Muse**, the more of that kind of thing we can get the better.

Karin and Karen – Film Studies database, if it exists.

Shelley – former professor in our Government Department complained that we didn't have **Lexis-Nexis**.

Chen -- **ProQuest** (ABI/INFORM and National Newspapers) databases and **Biography** and Genealogy Master Index.

**What has been frustrating about the databases?**

Crashes, error messages.

Mike – I get a script error message that says, "Do you want to debug this page" and I've learned to say no to that and it's O.K. Otherwise it kicks me into visual basic editor and I'm not going to touch that!

[When asked it this was happening going through the KYVL Gateway or the native search interfaces, which most WKU faculty and students use, Mike did say that error message occurs only with the Gateway.]

Karen – "I find Books In Print is not always accurate or up to date. To tell you the truth, amazon.com is a lot more reliable!"

Chen – Sometimes it is difficult to go back and find a reference if you did not write down the exact citation and it would be wonderful to be able to save your **search history** to reconstruct your search.

Shelley – Students who use the databases and then come back and say there's nothing on this subject when I know well and good there is lots there. Points out that students are not learning to properly construct their searches to get results. Still need a lot of **user education**.

Malia – The **students** don't want to use the databases, they want to **use the web search engines** like Ask Jeeves and they get nothing. But I have to twist their arms to use these databases.

Mike – In a sense, this is the stage after using library journals, except they never went through that stage!

Malia – “The things they [the students] take for granted about the computer that I don’t know and then there are also the things I take for granted about the library that they don’t know...” and that leads to frustration.